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Zur Soziologie des Parteiwesens in der modernen Demokratie.

Untersuchungen über die oligarchischen Tendenzen des Gruppenlebens. Von ROBERT MICHELS, Professor in Turin.

Leipzig: Verlag von Dr. Werner Klinkhardt, 1911. Pp. xix+401.

This is one of the books which must be counted with by every serious American student of social psychology. Whether its conclusions are accepted or not, it should not be dismissed until every part of the analysis has been tested and either confirmed or corrected. The author describes his purpose in this way (p. vii):

It is our task then to deal critically with the task of solving the problem of democracy. As a matter of fact it appears to us that democracy, both as a movement and as a world of thought, is today in the sign of a crisis from which it cannot emerge whole. It has encountered obstructions, barricades not merely in its path but in itself, which it seems capable of removing only to a limited degree.

I have faced this problem in a purely scientific way. . . . The logical precondition of every possible prognosis is exact diagnosis. The complex of tendencies in the way of the realization of democracy cannot easily be disentangled and catalogued. Yet it is possible to arrive inductively at an analysis, at least a provisional one. These tendencies reside (1) in human nature itself, (2) in the nature of political conflict, (3) in the nature of organization. *Democracy leads to oligarchy; indeed it consists in an oligarchy.*

So far as the analysis of democracy has to do with the skein of leading ideas and with political mechanisms it has been carried on by many scholars in a way which leaves little to be done. On the other hand, *the effect of democracy upon party life* has remained virgin soil. . . . The study and the analysis of political parties constitutes a new branch of science—a marginal science between the social, the philosophico-psychological and the historical disciplines, and it may be called applied sociology. As such, however, it is worthless if it is not analytically explained. We have fairly well written histories of every party in Europe. . . . On the other hand, there is crying need of the second branch of the science, the analysis of the nature of parties. We think the present volume represents a development of this second branch. We have struck out a new path in our analysis of leadership in the party structure of modern democracy.

One is reminded at once of Ostrogorski, as a single illustration of books which suggest that the present author's claims as a path-breaker may be somewhat excessive. The title of an early section, "The Hypocrisy of Political Parties for the Purpose of Gaining

Power," recalls Ratzenhofer on the theme "ambiguity as a factor in political conflict." But this question of precedence is trifling. Has the book opened up new reaches of analysis? I answer, yes, emphatically. The titles of the main divisions of the book will indicate a probability that I am right, viz., I, "The Aetiology of Leadership"; II, "The Actual Dominance of the Leaders"; III, "Psychological Reaction of Leadership upon the Led"; IV, "Social Analysis of Leadership"; V, "Attempts at Preventive Limitation of the Power of Leaders"; VI, "Synthesis: The Oligarchic Tendencies of Organization."

I have not been able to read sufficiently between the lines to discover precisely what in the author's judgment is the probable inference from analysis of the psychology of democracy. Since he finally leans for support upon the unspeakable von Haller (*Restauration der Staatswissenschaften*, 1816), the suspicion is that he is after all an echo of that champion of ecclesiastical monarchy. Whether this inference is correct or not, we cannot afford to overlook this argument that democracy is essentially pathological.

ALBION W. SMALL

Contrat de travail et salariat. Introduction philosophique, économique et juridique à l'étude des conventions relatives au travail dans le régime du salariat. Par ADEODOT BOISSARD, Professeur d'Économie et de Législation Industrielles à la Faculté Libre de Droit de Paris. Paris: Bloud et Cie, 1910. Pp. 331.

Although this little book is hardly more than a syllabus of parts of courses given to law students at Lille and Paris, and to the hearers in the *semaines sociales* in different parts of France, it contains symptoms which should not be overlooked by American students of tendencies in thought about social problems. It represents a standpoint with which American academic social scientists are relatively little acquainted. The author says: "It is my ambition to contribute to the elaboration of the doctrines of social catholicism, that is, of a sociology truly and integrally realistic, and for that very reason harmonious at once with the necessities of the physical or economic order, and with the spiritual needs and the postulates of Christian morality."

Whether a "truly and integrally realistic sociology" can be